

The American TEACHER

DECEMBER, 1918



Another Autocracy to Conquer

Teachers of the World

Get Together

**The Conference of Trade
Union Women**

**Democracy in Education
Education for Democracy**

DO NOT CLIP
THIS NUMBER.

The Demands of Democracy

DEMOCRACY demands a citizenry that excels in initiative, self-control and self-direction. It must have free men and free women, who respect the rights of others while jealous of their own; who perform their duties not thru compulsion, but because of an inner urge.

It is probably the most important duty of the schools to prepare the future citizens of our Republic for such a life.

Obviously, for this purpose we must employ only such as have had actual experience in democracy. But existing conditions are just the opposite. Almost universally, teachers, who more than others come into immediate and prolonged contact with the children, are mere cogs in the educational machine. Courses of study and methods of teach-

ing are generally prescribed by the authorities. Their own personal experience and judgment are usually ignored. In the administration of the school, they are consulted by the superiors only when it pleases them to do so. On the whole, the teacher has but little opportunity to exercise initiative. The school is a petty autocracy, with the principal or superintendent exercising almost despotic control, and the teacher an obedient sub-

ordinate. Of such is the training ground for democracy!

It is well known that standards of conduct are generally transmitted downward. This is undoubtedly true of the classroom, where teachers as a rule reproduce methods employed by their superiors. As a result, children live in an atmosphere of repression and restraint, precisely like that which envelops the professional life of the teacher.

Is there any doubt that such training is not conducive to the best interests of democracy? There must be a radical change in current school administration. The school itself should be a democratic organization. Teachers must be entrusted with a large part, if not all of the responsibility for the curriculum, methods and management of

the school. This is necessary not only because teachers should be skilled in the art of self-government, but also because society cannot afford to ignore the experience, judgment and enthusiasm of the thousands who make teaching their life work.

—From "New Schools for Old," Dr. Alexander Fichandler, Prin. P.S. 165, Brooklyn, N. Y., in "The Arbitrator for September, 1918.

CONTENTS

	PAGE
Editorials	207
Teachers of the World	210
Get Together	212
The Conference of Trade Union Women	214
The Question of Discipline, II.....	218
What They Say	224

The American Teacher

Entered as second-class matter, February 21, 1912, at the Post Office at New York, N. Y.; under the Act of March 3, 1879. Published at 70 Fifth Avenue, New York.

Vol. VII., No. 10

DECEMBER, 1918

One Dollar a Year

Education Thru the World

THE war has done at least two things for us that have been of great value in education. It has shattered the mental casts of educational leaders, setting free their minds for expansion. And it has shown up the weaknesses in the educational systems of every nation, both those of the Teutonic nations and those of the Allies. Today every nation is looking to education to give it the method for the salvage and the development of the most precious of possessions—the minds of the children.

So genuine and intense is the desire to make of education the means for fundamental national reconstruction that the important movement described by Dr Hurt in this number finds the necessary avenues ready to open. May we not hope that our own union movement will be active in demonstrating the importance of democracy in education as a contribution from America to the nations of the earth?

The End of the Seventh Year

WITH this number THE AMERICAN TEACHER closes the seventh year of its existence. It has been the custom of the managers of this experiment in democracy to bring to mind at this period of the year the accomplishments indicated in the previous ten numbers, and thus to set a stake for future readings.

The most significant event in the history of the periodical took place this year. It be-

came in fact the organ of The American Federation of Teachers. For the first time every member of that organization receives the magazine, as part of the return for the payment of dues. Altho this is only the fourth number published under the new arrangement, there should be by this time a definite impression in the minds of the new readers concerning the worth of this portion of "value received." On the nature of this impression depends the future importance of THE AMERICAN TEACHER in the movement for democracy in education in this country.

It is for the readers, the members of the entire national, rather than for the officers alone, to settle the question of whether a periodical which endeavors to interpret the union movement to teachers and to give that movement vitality and power can be a success. Since this undertaking has never been made in the world before, it is necessarily an experiment. And like all experiments it has to be carried out by the method of "trial and error." With the help of suggestions from all over the country, it is hoped that our "trials" and our "errors" may be reduced to the lowest possible number.

Within the time of this experiment as thus far carried out the greatest war of history has been decided in favor of the allies of our country. Already the thoughts of men are on the problems of reconstruction. The old order is no longer satisfactory. For some the task of devising proposals for reconstruction will come with embarrassing difficulties, but for teachers in the union movement there should be only the joyful anticipation of the opportunity to put into shape for actual use ideas that have been expressed from time to time in these columns, in the resolutions

of the national and in the proposals which we have worked out in cooperation with labor.

Whatever may be said of the old line organizations of teachers, it should not be possible to say of locals in the American Federation of Teachers that they are neglecting these inspiring opportunities to join in the actual work of rebuilding the frame work of our national existence. If the union movement among teachers actually expresses itself in demanding the elimination of autocracy in education, and the adoption of democracy, in every town and city where locals exist, the vitality of the movement will thereby be guaranteed.

Let the coming year see the fulfillment of this desire.

Another Autocracy to Conquer

THE mightiest and haughtiest of autocrats is overthrown! Such were the glad words that were flashed before the world on November eleventh. The news meant peace, the ushering in of democracy, and the death knell of imperialism and militarism, the twin brothers of autocracy. Despite this remarkable victory of the Allies, the war against autocracy is not yet over.

While the greatest military autocrat is powerless, the educational autocrats still occupy the seats of the mighty, striking terror into the hearts of their subjects.

In important centers of population in America the thoughts of teachers are as effectively stifled by the educational autocrats as they have been in Austria and Germany by the Carlsbad Resolutions and the other reactionary deeds of the disciples of Metternich. In New York City three high school teachers were dismissed in December, 1917, not for doing anything, not for thinking any thing, but because they had criticised their educational autocrats who thereupon charged them with thinking certain thoughts which the autocrats regarded as detrimental to

their administration of the schools. Their autocratic conduct, much to the surprise of enlightened educators has been upheld by a recent decision of Thomas E Finegan, Acting Commissioner of Education, of the State of New York, in a decision full of misinterpretations which stamp Dr Finegan as an official unsafe to trust with the all-inclusive "For Cause," the technical form under which teachers may be dismissed from service in the State of New York.

The Teachers Union of the City of New York, nothing daunted by this unexpected decision, will continue its fight against educational autocracy until victory crowns its efforts. If, perchance, the forces of reaction and autocracy, supported by an unenlightened or indifferent public opinion, are still too strong to be overcome by nascent unionism, then it will have the satisfaction of having gone down to defeat in the noblest of causes—*freedom of thought in educational institutions.*

Our Childish Minds

ONE manifestation of war excitement which everyone of us has noticed in the play of children, as well as in the sober talk of adults, has been the frequent use of expressions such as "Kan the Kaiser," and "Kill the Kaiser." Even a university professor sent to THE AMERICAN TEACHER with words of praise a versified effusion written by a friend of his, entitled, "Kan the Kaiser," which was to be sung to the tune of "A Hot Time," or some such ditty. Another person of generally fine intelligence proposes to exhibit the Kaiser at \$1 a look to obtain money for reconstruction.

Aside from the matter of propriety in the conduct of a real professor in circulating music-hall verse, there comes the more important consideration of the degree of intelligence manifested by those childish minds that put so much of their reaction against the greatest crime of history into ineffectual emotion. Every thought given to Kanning, Killing or Exhibiting, the Kaiser is by that

amount drawn away from the realization that military craft and commercial idealism had much to do with starting this particular war, and will determine the continuance of wars if we are not on our guard. It is quite conceivable that those who stand for universal military service, and thereby for the continuance of war, will contemplate with equanimity the widespread insistence upon dire destruction for the Kaiser, so long as he is not disposed of too quickly.

Not Even the Labor Unions Want Us to Strike

THE suggestion has been made that a section of the article, "Why Join the Teachers Union?" printed in the November number, seemed to indicate that the Teachers Union of the City of New York has a provision in its Constitution making the strike possible. No such provision exists there, or probably in the Constitution of any teachers' local in the country. Like the National Union of Teachers of England the American Federation of Teachers can be said to hold that the ready appeal we are able to make to the public conscience, especially when backed by labor, bids fair to give us immunity from the necessity of striking. Furthermore, it is well known that a resolution has been passed relative to the Federal Employees Union by the Executive Council of the American Federation of Labor to the effect that the strike by civil service employees is disapproved.

Hence, a sympathetic strike by teachers would also seem to be a highly improbable event.

Favor Labor Party

Chicago, November 23.—The Chicago Federation of Labor has submitted to its affiliates a plan to organize a labor party. The platform presented includes full recognition of trade unions, government ownership of natural resources, tax on land values, the eight-hour day, equal pay regardless of sex, league of nations, labor representation at the peace conference, opposition to child labor, representation of labor in proportion to its voting strength in all government departments and upon all government boards of demobilization.

Christmas Eve—1918

BY JEANNE JUDSON

Christmas Eve and the snow so white,
Laid like a cloak on the earth below;
Christmas chimes, and the sunset light
Bathing the cross in a blood-red glow.

Red cross above and white clad earth,
Promise renewed in earth and sky,
Chimes for the Peace Lord's glad rebirth,
Mercy endures — He did not die.

THE AMERICAN'S CREED FREE

An artistic, illustrated color print of the American's Creed, as approved in Congress, April 13, 1918, with the story of the origin of the Creed and the doctrinal authorities upon which it rests, will be furnished free to teachers who apply through their Principals to Matthew Page Andrew, Chairman, Publicity Committee of the Executive Council for the American's Creed, 849 Park Avenue, Baltimore, Maryland. The Creed with its history was published in *The American Teacher* for May-June, 1918.

TO MEMBERS OF THE A F OF T

Every member of the American Federation of Teachers in good standing receives the American Teacher free of charge. In return for this, for the benefit of being protected, and of having a fearless organization to help fight for the professional rights of the members, the Federation maintains that each member should feel it a deep obligation, as well as a privilege, to be faithful in those matters that enable the officers to carry out their duties with satisfaction and efficiency. The regular payment of dues to the locals, the regular attendance at meetings, and the generous grant of personal service, all help to make the movement "carry on."

The American Teacher

Democracy in Education Education for Democracy
Published monthly, except July and August by

THE AMERICAN FEDERATION OF TEACHERS

at 70 Fifth Avenue, New York City

HENRY R LINVILLE, *Editor*

ABRAHAM LEFKOWITZ, *Business Manager.*

At the time of expiration, a bill will be found in the copy. Subscribers are requested to give prompt notice of changes in address.

Remittances should be made in postal money-order, express order, draft, stamps or check (New York exchange).

SUBSCRIPTION PRICE, ONE DOLLAR FOR THE YEAR—
FOREIGN, \$1.10.

Teachers of the World

H W HURT, PH D

*Chief Educational Division, Foreign Press
Bureau, Committee on Public Information*

EIGHT HUNDRED THOUSAND in the United States, one hundred seventy-five thousand in Great Britain, one hundred fifty thousand in France, two hundred ten thousand in Germany, two hundred fifty thousand in Russia, one hundred thousand in Italy, one hundred thousand in China, one hundred seventy thousand in Japan (and so on thru the list of nations). Such are these great standing armies of teachers—guardians of tomorrow.

It has been an objective of the Educational Division of the Foreign Press Bureau to try to reach these teachers thru the press and to bind them together more closely in friendship and goodwill. They represent a great International force hitherto quite unmobilized but united by multiple bonds of learned societies, of languages and literatures, and of more or less common methodology. Thruout the neutral and allied world enemy propagandists had circulated every conceivable distortion of our education and life and ideals. These needed to be counteracted by modest but accurate interpretations of our life, which however sought to avoid our tendencies toward superlatives and to allow facts to carry their own story. To effect this in the educational field, the program of an Educational Exchange was developed.

Each week there has gone abroad during the past year some articles on education, and since July or August there have been a half dozen such interpretations each week, as about one-tenth of the total material covering agriculture, labor, medicine, news, etc. These have been forwarded in the diplomatic pouch to some thirty-five foreign countries where our representatives, generally attachés of the Embassies, have received, translated and passed them on to the press of the country in question. Here they have

either appeared in the public, the literary or the technical educational press.

These articles have been written on request by leading educators all over the United States who have, with loyalty and great personal sacrifice of time, donated them to the cause of International goodwill. These authors cover the best known names among our educators.

Further, the educational press of the U. S. has generously given permission to use their current articles and has further signified a readiness to accept the Exchange Service. This Exchange program was based on the idea that only as people have things in common can they cooperate. Basic among those things is knowledge about each other. Unfortunately, the teachers of the world know little about each other. The great mass of the graded school teachers do not receive an adequate living wage—and they have had little chance for travel or study about other peoples. (In higher education conditions are not so bad internationally.) So while we asked our educators to interpret our educational system, and ideals and progress to others, we also asked foreign nations to interpret their country to us—feeling that we had much to learn from these older cultures. In England, in Spain and elsewhere, the Government has authorized a native educator to mobilize the writings of his people for us.

For the purpose of translating such articles, a large staff of volunteer translators have offered their services to the government without compensation.

Special requests cabled from certain countries have been met, and the articles, often illustrated with pictures of American school equipment and life, have gone by the next transport.

There is a great interest abroad in this

sort of International Educational Entente, as evinced by correspondence conducted with the various embassies and legations and their governments. It is one of the educationally and internationally important discoveries of war effort that this sort of thing is basic—that in time of peace it has an even more vital rôle than in war. Conference with foreign leaders in various educational missions, which are coming hither frequently, have revealed their conviction that the governments of the world should, on the fallen ruins of secret diplomacy, initiate a type of diplomacy of brotherhood, with educational and scientific representatives in every nation, seeking ways thru the exchange of ideas to further the good of each and all.

Foreign countries, and especially Latin America, are earnestly interested in our opportunities for professional study, and the opportunities that thus open to our graduate schools, thru the spread of information about our institutions, will be most significant in the intellectual leadership of the next one or two decades.

Foreign representatives have urged that we undertake an international educational magazine—an international Bureau of Educational Information—a world Congress of Teachers, and many other challenging thoughts. But here are the teachers of the world—millions strong; they influence the ideas of tomorrow's citizens and leaders the world over; in their hands is the growth of liberal democracy and of international goodwill. It is to be hoped that the warm reception accorded this work in thirty-five countries will point the way to the larger and permanent organization of this work, which will join the ideas and ideals and hearts and hands of the Teachers of the World.

Shall Teachers Organize?

The teacher's work has become recognized as one of the most worthy and important of the professions. Wherein does the work of a teacher differ from that of the master of a trade? Should teachers organize and form unions similar to the numerous trade unions found in all parts of the land? If the members of a trade union can through organization demand and obtain better working conditions and

increased wages, why should not teachers similarly organize and thus secure adequate returns for their labor? These are questions which frequently arise and are worthy of due consideration.

We distinguish between a profession and a trade. A profession places service above compensation. The doctor, lawyer, minister and teacher are frequently called upon to serve those who may not be in position to compensate them even partially for services rendered. In a trade, however, the personnel stands on the basis that each man should be adequately paid for the kind and amount of work done. The skilled mechanic receives better pay than the unskilled workman, and the master of a trade may receive twice the compensation that an apprentice can obtain. The degree of skill an artisan possesses and the amount of work that he performs are the principal factors which determine his compensation. Workers in different trades form unions to secure better working conditions, reasonable hours and fair compensation for the work rendered. In case wages are low and the hours long the trade union through its organization may compel an employer to comply with demands made by the union.

In the teaching profession we find the need for a betterment of conditions. The average salary paid to our teachers is admittedly low. Living conditions today make the purchasing power of the salary scarcely half that of three years ago. Teachers are to-day demanding, and in many places getting, an increase of salaries. Associations have been formed and representatives chosen to present the claims of those interested and the reasons why salaries should be increased. The time has not yet come when teachers' organizations resort to the drastic methods frequently used by trade unions. Because of the professional character of their work the teachers as a class have deemed it neither right, reasonable nor dignified to use methods other than those of argument and persuasion in order to accomplish the ends in view.

It is extremely unfortunate that money matters should at all engage the attention of those following the teaching profession. Teachers' organizations have had larger and more worthy aims in view. High ethical standards have as a rule prevailed among them. Better preparation, increased efficiency and larger professional service—these and similar ideals have in the main guided teachers in both their personal and group activities.

To remove the apparent need of teachers' unions, school and city officials would do well to recognize the principle that the workman is worthy of his hire, and that if the standards of the teaching profession are to be maintained a reasonable and adequate salary schedule must be speedily established. —From *American Education* (Albany, N. Y.) for November, 1918.

Get Together*

JAMES J BAGLEY

President Franklin Union, No. 23 (The Pressmen's Union), New York

THERE are some of you who do not belong here unless you have signed the application blank to become members of the Union. I am here to tell some of the teachers what I think of them. I recollect that down in the First Street School in 1898, a boy had a teacher, and he was fond of the teacher, and she was fond of him. She was getting some \$800 a year. The little boy was getting the best she had to give. Today that teacher is getting about \$1,600. The boy that teacher taught is getting \$10,000 a year. It is a true story. The teacher has not been able to raise her salary for the simple reason that she lost sight of the one way to do it—by organization. The teacher should be in a labor union.

I do not know where the teachers get the idea of "profession." Teaching is not a profession, it is work, absolutely; and as soon as they get wise to this, the sooner they will free themselves from living on somebody else. I know teachers who do live on somebody else. Teachers can't live, eat and dress right on the salary they get from New York City. They have got to be supported by relatives.

Your chairman touched on the Franklin Union and the trouble caused the union. He seemed to infer success was due to leadership. Unions succeed because they have an active rank and file who insist that leaders do something. For seventeen years the Franklin Union had an inactive file. In those years they got only a four-dollar a week increase. Perhaps the teachers got as much or less in that time.

Finally our men decided to attend the union meetings and to get rid of the dead wood, and they did it. I came in on the

rise and became a labor leader. They put me there to go out and get some money and I decided to get the rank and file to insist on getting more money, and the moment the presses shut down they got more money. They got \$6 a week increase, and then \$6 more, in about seventeen or eighteen months. One law we follow, and that is to have the entire body of employees of the printing trades in one organization. If teachers want anything they have to go out and get it. If teachers were to do a little thinking on their own account this hall would not be able to hold the crowd.

I noticed in today's paper something Mayor Hylan has said. I don't like to talk against anybody, especially the mayor, but the mayor is supposed to hold a union card. But there is no greater contempt one union man has for another than when he does not act like a union man. Let us see what Mayor Hylan says when the teachers asked for more money. "This sort of thing will have to be cut out. When I was a boy and asked a farmer for more pay the farmer said that if I wanted more money I could go out and work for some one else."

Of the membership of Franklin Union of twenty-six hundred, five hundred went to high school, but I am safe in saying not 100 graduated from high school. Working as apprentices for six months our men get \$17 a week; one dollar increase each year and at the end of three years, \$24 a week. A teacher gets \$800 a year or \$15.50 per week for three years, and if she is progressive, after a good many years she takes a promotion examination and gets \$1,820, and she stays at that if she is satisfied.

I say there is only one way teachers can do anything, that is by getting together and organizing, and they can do it. We have been fighting the Butterick Publishing Com-

* Address before The Teachers Union in New York, November 8, 1918.

pany for twelve years. Today six hundred and ninety people in the company are on the street and tomorrow Buttericks will sign a contract, and the people will go back to work.

The labor movement is waiting for the teachers. We want everybody whether they work with their hands or their brains in one organized labor union movement. The labor union movement is not established for only one thing; it is established for the enlightenment of the people, and to drive evil out of the world. They talk about democracy, but the labor movement has been fighting the real battle of democracy. It has been fighting continuously. It is fighting for the democracy of the common people. The teacher is not getting enough to live on. Authorities tell us we can't live if we have somebody else at home on less than \$1,682 a year.

Some of the teachers have decided that they will not think of getting married. Their folks have died off one by one, and they are left to support themselves, and they cannot do it. I happen to know a couple of teachers. They live in some little furnished room if they are lucky, and live on a bottle of milk and a box of biscuits. It is their own fault. That is how organized labor looks at it.

The policy of our organization from the day that women came into it has been that women get as much as the men. The moment a woman competes against a man, that moment the man's salary is going down. You have 22,000 teachers and we figure that for every active worker there are 10 votes. Figure out what 22,000 teachers at five votes each amount to in a city of this size. Figure out what 22,000 teachers organized into one body can do.

The other day I spoke to Taft. I wanted to know what the War Labor Board could do, and he went into a lengthy statement about the Board—that the War Board would try to smoothe out the wrinkles between capital and labor. And he is the man who, when asked, "What is a man to do if he cannot get a job?" answered, "God knows!"

If there are any city officials who can tell a teacher to get out, we will take her into our

union. But she must work with the person next to her, not against her. And if there are twenty-one teachers in a school and only two are members of the union, they must get four more, and these then must get eight, etc., until all belong. You have the addresses of the teachers as soon as they are appointed. If you have an efficient organization, the moment a teacher enters the service, members should call upon her and make her join the union. You will never get union unless you get that 100-per-cent membership. The labor union needs you and you need the labor union. You have to help yourself. I hope you will wake up to the fact that no trade union can come in and make things better. You must have spirit in your hearts. Get together, and the moment you get together, the dollars will take care of themselves.

Teachers as Scabs

School teachers who have remained at their posts in spite of rising prices and stationary pay may well resent the manner of the appeal that has been made for persons who have left the profession to return now to fill the 50,000 vacancies, and replace the 120,000 who have had no training for the work. The shortage of teachers is due to no sudden turn of fortune, nor to any phase of the war. It is due to the fact that school boards have kept salaries at such a low level that persons with the qualifications for teaching have gone into other work. The disease carries its own cure. When the boards find the old salaries will not secure teachers they will pay more. But if as an act of patriotic duty, persons qualified to teach volunteer their services at the old salaries the school boards will see no necessity for advancing their pay, and will continue the former school-strangulation policy. To leave the schools without teachers may be a slight hardship temporarily for the children, but it will be better even for them in the end; for it will awaken old foggy school boards to the necessity of paying sufficient salaries to secure real talent to enter the teaching profession, and to hold what is already in it. To volunteer at the present rates would be in principle nothing less than strike-breaking. Enough teachers have left their jobs to compel better treatment for those who remain, provided their places are not filled at the old rates. Any one intending to enter the profession should do so only after giving careful consideration to those who have stayed at their posts in the forlorn hope of some time receiving proper recognition of their service.—*The Public*, of November 23, 1918.

The Conference of Trade Union Women

CLARA K STUTZ

*President Grade Teachers' Union (Local
No. 16), Washington, D C*

ON October 4, 1918, at the call of Miss Mary Van Kleeck, Director, and Miss Mary Anderson, Assistant Director of the Women in Industry Service of the Department of Labor there assembled in Washington trade union women representing the various national and international unions for the purpose of determining standards governing the employment of women in industry.

The historic conference held its sessions in the courtroom of the War Labor Board in the Southern Building. It was formally opened by Secretary of Labor, William B Wilson. Mr Wilson said that it was the hope of the Department not only to maintain the standards that already exist for the protection of the woman worker, but to raise those standards where they had proved inadequate, and to secure the strict observance of such new and improved standards in the industries which women have been compelled to enter in consequence of the draft on our man power for military service. He stated the purpose of calling the conference was to secure the advice of the women most familiar with the conditions of labor in helping to formulate standards, and to learn from them from what industries women should be debarred.

At the roll-call each delegate was requested to give a brief summary of conditions in her particular field. In this way it was brought to the attention of the conference that women were already working on cranes in some of the great manufacturing plants, that they were engaged in "puddling" in the iron industry, and they were employed as stevedores for loading and unloading ocean-going vessels, and were required to enter the holds of ships. It was also brought out that under

the plea of labor shortage in some plants men were being dismissed, and replaced by women at a lower wage. Government control of railroads, telegraph and telephone lines has thrown many new industries under the supervision of the National Federation of Federal Employees. Sail-makers, flag-makers, the wheelbarrow men, etc., of the navy yard and arsenals are now federal employees. In the railroad industry the hazard to women working at night in isolated switch-towers and as section hands was emphasized. The conference went on record as opposing night work for women except in case of national emergency, thus backing up the policy outlined by Secretary Wilson.

The conference demanded the enforcement of a maximum day of eight hours, as distinguished from the basic eight hours for computing wages with pay for overtime. Delegates stated that a tendency existed on the part of the workers to break down this standard on account of the attraction of the overtime pay. The shorter day was urged both in the interest of the worker's health and of increased production.

The platform adopted includes the enforcement of provision for the worker's health and safety, sanitary regulations, besides a variety of special regulations for particular industries.

Revision of Civil Service laws to insure to women equal opportunity with men in appointments, promotions, salaries and admission to examinations was urged. The establishment of adjustment boards in the Departments on which the employees should be adequately represented was asked for.

The basic principle of equal pay for equal work was reaffirmed. The conference called upon the wage boards to fix minimum wages

for women on the same basis as for men. The appointment of women on all wage boards was demanded. A protest was entered against the action of the Senate in denying the President's appeal for the passage of the suffrage amendment for women.

The following resolutions of especial interest to teachers were adopted:

The American Federation of Teachers wishes to present for your consideration several educational policies, the substance of which has already been approved by the American Federation of Labor. These policies underlie real democracy in industry, and they are also the mainspring of the life of the nation itself.

We recommend the adoption of more stringent laws dealing with the compulsory education of children and urge especially the reestablishment of a minimum age of 16 years.

We especially urge the development of vocational guidance and industrial education. Every child should know the industrial history of the world.

The health conditions in all schools should be investigated by properly authorized officials who believe that the health of a nation depends largely on the health of the youth. All overcrowding in schoolrooms should cease.

An extension of playgrounds and outdoor facilities for normal exercise to meet the needs of all the children of all the people should be insisted upon. A nation should realize that by so safeguarding the life of the child it saves for itself in years to come.

There should be an establishment of a complete system of modern physical education.

"It has become a truism that the Germany of to-day is the product of the German schoolmaster of yesterday. Just as certainly the America of tomorrow, perhaps the world of tomorrow, will be the product of the American teachers of to-day. What then if the American teaching force of to-day comes to consist of an inferior selection from our present teachers, supplemented by high school girls of no experience, of no practical training, of temporary tenure, and of only passing interest in their work?" (Joseph Swain, Chairman of N E A Committee on Salaries).

We wish to bring to the attention of this conference the fact that there is a shortage of 100,000 trained teachers in the United States to-day! This has been brought about by two great factors: First, the autocratic systems under which teachers work; second, by the totally inadequate salaries. The American Federation of

Teachers believes that as democracy is recognized in industry, and as it is developed among the teaching body, the first factor will be eliminated. The salary situation is the one that the nation must face immediately if it would save the democratic educational standards of the United States.

"This is a day of big things. It is pre-eminently a day when those who are serving the State must be granted the right of way. The teachers of the country are not only serving the State now; they have been serving it all their lives. They are the captains of the army of understanding: not alone of that technical understanding upon which military victory depends, but of that larger human understanding upon which depends the whole hope and future of the world. If we spend billions to save the world, can we not spend millions to make the world worth saving? We *properly* pour forth our treasures without stint to those who shape our steel and iron. Cannot we grant a living wage to those who are molding our life itself?" (Swain.)

Therefore, we urge that there may be Federal legislation appropriating \$100,000,000 to be apportioned by a Federal Department of Education, if one is created, or that failing, by a Federal Board upon which organized labor and education shall be represented, such fund to apply only to the payment of salaries of public school teachers in a state (including teachers of physical education and of English to adults under public school supervision) after such state shall have satisfied the Federal Department, or special board that adequate standards are to be maintained and shall have appropriated an equal amount.

We further urge equal wages for equal work. As in all other branches of industry, so in teaching, the woman worker has been unjustly discriminated against in regard to equal pay, and we would recommend that this economic defect be remedied wherever it may exist.

We would further recommend that salary compensation be sufficient to maintain a teacher without necessity of night work, which reduces her efficiency as a teacher, and tends to debase the wage scale in other industries.

We further urge more extensive use of the school plant for the civic, social and educational needs of the community.

"The war is training the National imagination to see things on a new scale. It is no longer a day when we say, 'This ought to be done. We will do it, provided we can get the money.' It is a day rather when we say of whatever is vital to the public welfare, 'Let this be done.' And then we get the money." (Swain.)

Miss Anderson explained the plan through which the Government expects to secure the enforcement of adequate standards governing the employment of women in industry. All contracts of the Federal departments will contain clauses requiring full compliance with state labor laws. In addition, other requirements are made by the Federal Government. Such requirements to be broken only by permission of the Council of National Defense and the Department of Labor, for a limited period of time, in a particular plant, in case of national emergency, such emergency to be declared to exist by the Council of National Defense after full investigation by the Women in Industry Service.

Mr Felix Frankfurter, Chairman of the War Labor Policies Board addressed the conference October 5, at its closing session. He explained the chaotic condition of the industrial world created by the war, told where and how the pressure is likely to come which the women must meet, and he made clear that woman's work was essential in the winning of the war.

Mr Frankfurter said in part:

As President Wilson, in regard to the international situation said, the only way we can have peace and order and a life that is tolerable, is by a process of everybody who is concerned sitting down and reaching the largest possible good that in a limited human world you can reach. Exactly the same situation is true in the industrial world. There may be specialized experience and specialized needs and specialized power on the part of the workers. There is specialized experience and a specialized problem on the part of the management. And each side being preoccupied with itself does not take into account these other things.

I say to manufacturers constantly that the real reason why I believe in unionism, in organization on the other side, is because unless there is organization, unless you have this means of working these things out together, there is a responsibility thrown upon you as employer that no human being can possibly discharge, namely, having regard not only for your interests but for other people's interests. It cannot be done. We are limited human beings, and no man is wise enough, gentle enough, no matter how right he may be in his heart, to be able to think out

all of his own interests as well as the other people's interests.

That to me is the fundamental reason for organization, particularly where the element of shifting is so large as it is among the working women as compared with working men. And that is why I believe that unionism is such an essential instrument of education in a democracy.

And so beyond these standards, beyond the physical protection, beyond the health standards, beyond the question if night work, beyond the processes that will give us the efficiency, over and beyond that the thing we have got to work out is the attitude of men towards one another and towards the public as a whole, and that rests, women, more upon you than I suspect you sometimes realize.

You will forgive me if I am just a bit frank. I think in time of war we ought to deal with one another as a surgeon does in an operating room, be ruthless in order that the full situation may be revealed.

The thing that filled me most with a sense of confidence and hope and optimism, was what it means to have women participate the way they did participate, the way nations enable them to participate, in the conduct of their lives, but there was a sense of sadness at the poverty of trained leaders among them. Leaders are not born, but except a very few, leaders can be trained. And here was this great union on the Pacific Coast, and there were very, very few women in it who had the training, who had had the experience to lead those large numbers of girls wisely and effectively.

The thing that we need, and need terribly—I don't know whether you will agree with me but I hope you will, and I think you must—is the training to increased participation that women will have in industry, and therefore in government. Political power always leads to economic power, and *vice versa*. And the fundamental difficulty in our national life in so far as we have one, is the great discrepancy between the power of the women folk in industry compared with the power they have in politics. That is going to be remedied more and more. Of course that applies particularly as to women, not only because in war they are going into industry but after the war they are going to remain in industry, and your participation in government is going to be a very important participation. The President put the case well when he said that unless we have women participating in government we shall be only half wise. But you women must train your rank and file to make us wholly wise by being wise yourselves.

The delegates expressed enthusiastic admiration for the work undertaken by the Women in Industry Service, and resolved themselves into a permanent advisory committee to co-operate with the Service and to meet at the call of the Director.

The delegates at the conference were as follows:

MARGARET DALEY, United Garment Workers of America, New York.

FANNIE M COHN, International Ladies Garment Workers Union, New York.

IDA MCCUTCHEON, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, Pittsfield, Mass.

ELIZABETH CHRISTMAN, International Glove Makers Union, Washington.

MARY E MCGALLIEN, United Garment Workers of America, New York City.

MARY KELLIHER, Womans Trade Union League, Chicago.

AGNES J JOHNSON, Boot and Shoe Workers International Union, Chicago.

MISS CLARA K STUTZ, American Federation of Teachers, Washington, D C.

MISS ETHEL SMITH, Federal Employees Union, Washington, D C.

MRS MILDRED M SMITH, American Federation of Musicians, Washington, D C.

FLORENCE ETHERIDGE, Federal Employees Union, Vinita, Oklahoma.

EMMA STEGHAGEN, Womans Trade Union League, Chicago.

LAURA J GRADDICK, Bookbinders International Union, Washington, D C.

BRIGID HAGGARTY, National Federation of Postal Employees, Memphis, Tenn.

MARY E CAMPBELL, United Leather Workers, Wilmington, Del.

MARIE KUROWSKIT, Amalgamated Meat Cutters, Chicago.

MRS MAY PEAKE, International Association of Machinists, Boston.

BLANCHE DE CELLES, International Association of Machinists, Springfield, Mass.

ELIZABETH A KELLY, Cigar Makers International Union, Lancaster, Pa.

NELLIE H GALLAGHER, United Hatters of North America, Danbury, Conn.

MARY P SCULLY, American Federation of Labor.

Statutory Advisory Committees

What I propose, for the improvement of education, and the increasing participation in its government of the teachers themselves, is a very great development of Professional Advisory Committees, to be attached to all Education Authorities, national and local. The Teachers' Registration Council should evolve into a Standing Advisory Committee to the Ministry of Education. Every Local Education Authority should be statutorily required to appoint a Local Advisory Committee, genuinely representative of all grades and kinds of teachers in the locality, to be nominated, as far as possible, by the local branches of the professional associations. These Advisory Committees should have a statutory right to be consulted on all important changes which affected the profession or its service.—Sidney Webb quoted in *The London Teacher*.

This is the Official Organ of the

American Federation of Teachers ORGANIZED APRIL 15, 1916

Affiliated with the American Federation of Labor

OFFICERS OF THE A F O T

President, CHARLES B STILLMAN, Chicago,
1620 Lake Avenue, Wilmette, Ill.

Secretary-Treasurer, F G STECKER, Chicago,
1618 Lake Avenue, Wilmette, Ill.

National Organizer; First Vice-President,
L V LAMPSON, Washington, D. C.,
1336 Otis Place, N. W.

Editor, The American Teacher; Sixth Vice-President,
HENRY R LINVILLE, New York City,
36 Terrace Avenue, Jamaica.

Second V.-Pres., MABEL L REES, Brooklyn, N. Y. C.,
39 Winthrop Street.

Third Vice-President, ANITA BAILEY, Gary, Ind.,
650 Buchanan Street.

Fourth V.-Pres., JUDITH G RIDDICK, Norfolk, Va.,
722 Duke Street.

Fifth V.-Pres., S E COMPTON, Washington, D. C.,
Dunbar High School.

Seventh V.-Pres., CLARA K STUTZ, Washington, D. C.,
1628 Swann Street.

Eighth V.-Pres., CARRIE L COLBURN, Olean, N. Y.,
803 West Henley Street.

Ninth V.-Pres., ISABEL WILLIAMS, St. Paul, Minn.,
916 St. Clair Street.

The Question of Discipline

GEORGE CRONYN

Late of DeWitt Clinton High School, New York

II

The Teacher had been revolving certain cogitations during this Battle of the Theories. Just what, for instance, are morals—relative to children? Are habitual actions ever moral? Does not the word moral imply a decision—a choice—a judgment—the acceptance of one course of action in deliberate preference to another? If so, how can the purely mechanical reaction of Habit be claimed as moral? In fact, does not a real moral decision generally mean a breaking down or at least questioning of habit? Is not the essence of morality freedom? Miltonic phrases floated vaguely thru the Teacher's head?

What freedom of judgment is permitted the child, in the orderly confinement of the class room? Wherein does his appointed Keeper encourage the growth of a moral consciousness? Is not true moral consciousness, if there be such a thing, the consciousness of one's social relations? And what opportunity is given the individual, separated as he is, by every barrier of rule and custom from his fellow classmates, to develop that social attitude?

Is the normal teacher, the teacher of "Superior Merit," interested in learning how the class as a whole responds to breaches of its etiquette? Does he not rather treat infractions of discipline as reflections upon himself, and engage in strictly personal duels with the errant ones? As the Teacher pondered, he recalled the momentous issues of those first weeks at the Institution.

His Principal had summoned him for a conference at the end of the month. The Principal was agreeably youthful; he was therefore disposed to be indulgent, but he was troubled.

"It's just this way," he said, with a conciliatory accent rare enough among princi-

pals, when discipline is involved, "you know, yourself, that conditions in your room aren't, well, aren't quite up to the mark."

"Which mark?" asked the Teacher innocently.

"Of course, I know that you have Ideas," said the Principal, evading the challenge, "but where does the rest of the school come in? I tell you frankly the Old Man" (their astute Superintendent) "really doesn't like to bring visitors in there."

"Neither do I enjoy having them," answered the Teacher with the boldness of one who is indifferent to tenure of office. "Couldn't you persuade him to avoid the dangerous premises of Art until they have become presentable, if not conventional? And those tables—"

"Yes, I know; things are far from ideal, but the tables must be used; they can't be thrown away! About visitors, we'll see . . . how long do you want?"

"Four months immunity, at least!"

The Principal changed the subject by drawing out a High School ART catalogue, illustrated.

"Now here is the sort of thing I expect to get from your classes when they settle down. These were done by New York boys and girls. That's what I call pretty fine children's art."

The Teacher inspected the neat reproductions without enthusiasm.

"Excuse me," he said sceptically, "but I don't consider these examples of child art at all. It is the work of adult minds executed by children. Real child art is inconceivably remote from these admirably decorous specimens."

"Well, you know, you've got to show us," replied the Principal, warningly.

The Teacher was granted four months of

comparative freedom from inspection. He was free to employ any method of repression he chose. His favorite method was very simple: the inveterate chatterbox was gently withdrawn by the Teacher from his circle of listeners, and requested himself, to do nothing but listen (generally a hardship in itself).

"What do you hear?" the Teacher would say.

"A lot of noise."

"Do you like it?"

"Naw!"

"Well, that's what I have to listen to all day long."

"It's those girls!"

"No, young man! Don't fool yourself! Your voice is just as strong and active as theirs. Now, don't stop talking, but try to talk as you are talking to me now. See if you can't say just as much without saying it so loud that it hurts people's ears. That will do."

The Teacher spent two months in arousing the auditory consciousness of the Art students. He was as much interested in quiet voices, and in restrained timbre of voice, as in the products of those busy hands. You will say, that it was unnecessary labor; there should have been absolute quiet, from the very beginning. Or at most, a permissible whispering, always under strict regulation by the teacher. But the Teacher had formally abolished discipline. He had done this in order to stimulate Activity. That was the one theory he clung to tenaciously.

Indeed, the activity of the Three Hundred was phenomenal. At first it consisted largely in perpetual curiosity concerning the affairs of others. The passionate devotees of brush and pencil were objects of unabated, insatiable interest. There was much aimless wandering about the room, much empty vaporing, much indisputable nagging and teasing, one of the other. In these latter cases disputes and quarrels arose in which the Teacher interfered as little as possible, preventing blows, protecting those plainly at a disadvantage if necessary. It came gradually to be recognized that the workers were not to be annoyed, chiefly because at some time or

other, the offenders were annoyed by others, after they had concluded to try work for a change. They wandered, gabbled, and stared, possessed of the boundless restlessness of confined animals, without sufficient art impulse to hold them down to their seats. Moreover, it was vastly more comfortable to stroll than to bend over the low tables until one's back ached. They were utterly indifferent to the appearance of the room; they slyly dropped on the floor the paper they had just spoiled, and then disclaimed responsibility. They left their paint boxes in vile condition, and complained bitterly when they received them in the same condition from another class. Altogether, to the casual visitor, the Art room presented the spectacle of hopeless and muddled inefficiency. At times, the Teacher, surveying the ruin, cursed Education, or rather his own soul, which forbade him to teach as others.

Thruout the rest of the school a fine *esprit du corps* prevailed. Already the Honor Roll adorned the hall. The Discipline was becoming exemplary, that is, routine; the Superintendent spoke, in assembly, of Character Building. He felt assured that his boys and girls were learning to be neat, clean, orderly, well-behaved, and moral, as morals go.

All these pleasant accomplishments of Discipline evaporated however, between the Main Building and the "Tech;" there they were still primitives.

There were several quaint incidents to record.

One small lad had proved unbearable to his immediate neighbors until they implored relief. The Teacher requested the imp to report to his own desk for a discussion of the trouble, then turned to assist another pupil in difficulties of an artistic nature at the rear of the room.

Now the littlest boys and girls were accustomed to bring all sorts of queer gifts to the Teacher. That morning one of them had presented, with an air of supreme triumph, a large, shiny tin can, which housed a mammoth toad. The toad had proved too ambitious for the peace of the class and had to

be cast out of the window. The can remained on the Teacher's desk.

The Teacher, apprised by an indefinable stir, of something unusual, looked up; in his chair, the seat of official authority, sat the recalcitrant mischief-maker, with folded arms, pursed lips, and sternly regal front, wearing on his head as crown something bright and shiny—a Tin Can King! What would *you* do under the circumstances? Would you stress the Disposition or the Act?

The Teacher did neither, but went on about his business of extricating the artistically mired. As long as nothing revolutionary occurred, what did it matter how ingenious youngsters comported themselves before their fellows? Did it impugn the dignity of the Teacher. That was surely not a matter of chairs and tin cans, but of his day-by-day relationship with the members of the class. A dignity so easily lost was not worth having. Is not the fear of losing one's dignity tantamount to a confession of a greater fear, the fear of one's pupils? To such teachers discipline is an indispensable bulwark which shelters them from acutal contact with the barbarian hordes they thereby control.

But what, in heaven's name, was the effect on the class of his subversion of authority? There was no authority; therefore there was no subversion. The effect was practically nil. When the class saw that the Teacher was not going to make anything of it, they immediately lost interest in their Tin Can King. As for that self-annointed monarch, he made the discovery that it is next to impossible to keep up an air of colossal impudence in a vacuum of conflict. Taken to task, lectured, manhandled, he was ready to be pert, sullen, eventually crushed, tearful and repentant; but nothing was done about it, and his resistance rapidly faded. Tin cans were stupid things—if the fellows wouldn't laugh. He tried to face it out, failed miserably, removed the article, got out of the seat, and creeping back to where the Teacher was bending down absorbed, asked in a subdued whisper, if he couldn't go to work now. The Teacher nodded, without looking up, and he went away.

Oh the tension of classes! The strained, unnatural attention—then the slip in the cog—a mispronunciation—a sneeze—a stumbling reply—and the whole thing collapses in a gale of cackling, hysterical laughter, or irrepressible giggling, the teacher, all the while, nervously alert to catch and pin-down the ringleaders of the disorder which, he feels is undermining his precious (and unsubstantial) authority).

Then the incident of the boy who jumped out of the window.

The Teacher, at the summons of a friendly visitor, stepped into the hall, closing the door and leaving the class to their own devices. on re-entering they rose as one and said that Louis Markowitz had gone out of the window. The Teacher was almost startled, not so much by the daring "nerve" of the deed as by its physical execution, the windows of the Art room, tho on the ground floor, being by no means close to earth. Shortly, however, Louis himself appeared, in the normal way, through the door, and on enquiry, stated, with complete assurance of justification, that he had wished to absent himself, but, "bein' that you was chinin wid de guy outside I din wanta butt in" (Louis was a new arrival and still spoke pure New-Yorkese) and so had solved the problem in the politest fashion possible. Of course one had to explain to Louis that while his Disposition was all right, the Act was questionable from the standpoint of outsiders, who might be alarmed to see small boys dropping promiscuously from class-room windows.

Then there were the Art pencils.

Despite all the Teacher could do, they disappeared from time to time into pockets needful of those important instruments of communication. The loss necessitated a certain number of pupils going without them in subsequent periods of Art. The classes chafed. At length a group of Vigilantes sprang spontaneously into being, pledged to restore the missing pencils. Pencils they did restore—but not always Art pencils. The Teacher, showered with a motley array of nibbled points, and fearing the eventual denudation of the rest of the school in this

regard, had to call a halt on the activities of the band. He once more restored the full quota of lead; but his Faithfuls had made pencil "swiping" the most unpopular of occupations.

Then there was the eternal question of Cleaning Up.

The Teacher was loth to use compulsion. His pupils were quite frank in their opinion of dirty rooms and materials; but they were equally unaware of their individual responsibility in the matter. In that respect they were not far from their seniors.

Of all the periods during the Teacher's day the last was the most difficult. At that time came the very littlest boys and girls, a large, intensely active, noisy, and thoroughly irresponsible class. Can you conceive of some sixty tots, ranging in age from seven to nine, in disposition, kitten, fox terrier, and Spring lamb, at unrestricted play together, amusing themselves with cardboard, raffia, colored chalks or paint boxes? The resultant muss defies description!

A few faithful servitors in every class volunteered regularly to perform the duties of char-woman each day, but this arrangement proved burdensome even to the most willing. At length the Littlest of all the little girls, the quickest and ablest helper of the lot, suggested a scheme.

"If you will get me some small blank books, Teacher," said she one day, "I will get the work done."

The blank books were immediately forthcoming. In each book she wrote certain duties, and, by some fine executive sense all her own, assigned a book to a like number of girls, adjusting, changing, varying the work from day to day, with the tact and skill of a born manager. She was not above eight herself, and her obedient assistants were, in some cases, a year or more older. Thereafter she did no actual work, or at least only the minor duties, and delegated the whole labor to the others, who, strange to say, seemed to enjoy her efficient bossing. She had an excellent memory and in the absence of the Teacher could be relied upon to leave the Art room in as perfect condition, as tho

he himself were there to superintend. As an artist she was by no means inspired, but as an Efficiency Engineer she was a star!

Gradually other classes had their eyes opened to the need for Responsibility and adopted various contrivances for establishing and maintaining the integrity of the equipment. Clean-up squads were instituted at the instigation of the pupils, and, after weeks of trial and uncertainty, came at length to a firmer understanding of the part each member of a class should play in relation to the whole social unit.

The tables, however, continued to prove constant sources of irritation, they caused congestion in the passing to and fro of pupils, besides decentralizing the attention of the class, and they were fertile inducements to the careless youngster to cast his trash beneath. A holiday, accompanied by a great reception in another part of the Institution, necessitated their removal for a week. The Teacher seized the opportunity to experiment with an ideal seating arrangement, and at length made an important discovery, namely, that in a given space the same number of seats, disposed in a semi-circle, or in this case, two permits each pupil to occupy a much larger area, ample space for extra movements of the class. No sooner had the classes seated themselves than the advantages of the semi-circular plan became manifest. Each child was now a complete unit, at an equal distance from the point of central interest. Each individual was visible at once, and directly faced the Teacher. His contact with others was one-dimensional rather than two-dimensional; there could be no furtive crouching behind the boy in front, for only the Teacher or clear space was in front. Best of all, it gave a breadth, dignity, and amplitude to the appearance of the class room, totally lacking before. By arduous persuasion the Teacher succeeded in getting the tables abolished once and for all.

Do you think these lively youngsters did not respond to the new sensation? Do you imagine that the average child does not enjoy the manifestation of a greater order? If he has witnessed and aided in the growth of

that order, he does! Their praises of the novel experiment were loud and long. It was astonishing to see the rapid strides made henceforth by all the classes in their social consciousness? They began to be proud of their room, with a pride born of effort; they had wrestled with its problems, and struggled, not without signal failures, toward an ideal at no time clearly discernable. Children do not love disorder—any more, than they love idle tumult—but they are helpless before their own chaotic impulses, and they are never permitted to learn by an empirical process, the method of arriving at another state than anarchy, self-control. Teachers, principals and supervisors, seeing only the agreeable results of their discipline, vainly imagine that the pupils have taken to heart their oft-reiterated preachments. but let the unexpected occur, withdraw the iron hand for a brief moment, and the System vanishes, leaving the same old rebellious anarchy of the child!

The High School Principalship in New York

IN years past THE AMERICAN TEACHER has called attention frequently to the lack of standards apparently in the minds of the educational authorities when high school principals were being appointed in the City of New York. It takes a long time for the ideals of efficiency and democracy to get into official brains, and longer still for the public to realize what is being done to it, sometimes dishonestly. But in this wartime, brains seem to be more alert, determinations seem to be more swiftly formed, than in earlier "piping times of peace." Hence, the great encouragement we now feel when teachers come out and tell what they know. Kaiserism in education cannot withstand that, for in behalf of the great public the ideal of Democracy has been skillfully formulated by a master mind.

The two letters given below were printed in *The New York Evening Post*. They were

written by a man of excellent standing throughout the country as a teacher of English. We vouch for the accuracy of the statements made by Mr. Fairley.—Ed.

The Teacher's Lot

To the Editor of The Evening Post:

SIR: Every man I know who is teaching in the public schools of New York City comes back to his work this fall without enthusiasm, and, in some cases, with a positive sinking of the heart. There are several reasons for this: the low salaries, the character of the supervision to which we are subject, and the fact that teaching in our city is a blind alley job, the highest positions are not open to merit but to pull. This letter will attempt to discuss the third of these reasons.

In the high schools a man may go up as far as first assistant by his scholarships, his record, and by his ability in passing the necessary examinations. In the elementary schools one may become a principal on his record, his scholarship, and his ability in passing the requisite examinations, in short, in the regular civil service way. But if a high-school man aspires to be a principal, or if an elementary-school man aspires to be a district superintendent, he soon finds that he is confronted with a very different proposition. I am more familiar with the high school situation than I am with the elementary, so I will speak of that, but the situations and conditions in the two branches of the service are practically alike.

When a high school principalship becomes vacant in New York, a grand scramble begins. Every man who thinks he has the remotest chance of consideration begins to pull every wire of which he knows the existence. He calls on every member of the Board of Superintendents, with his cap in his hand. Then he seeks out every member of the Board of Education and presents his claims. If that were all, one could not greatly object. But that is only the beginning. Then our prospective candidate begins to work all his friends who have any shadow of influence, natural or adventitious. If he is a churchman, he asks all the dignitaries of his church to help him. If he has any political acquaintances, he urges them to do their bit; if he is a Mason, or an Odd Fellow, or a Snark, he asks his fellow-Masons and Snarks to help him; from every conceivable angle he brings what pressure he can to bear upon the superintendents and the members of the Board of Education.

One would suppose that these latter would revolt and demand that high school principals and district superintendents be appointed from an eligible list, but, so far as I know, no such revolt

has taken place. Instead, these gentlemen seem to enjoy the process. The superintendent now in charge of high schools has, indeed, set in operation a system whereby the prospective candidate visits for one brief day the vacant high school, and then writes out a painstaking report of what he would do if he were principal. This is, of course, a step in the right direction, but some of the superintendents do not take these reports seriously, a fact which is substantiated by the common report that since the system was put into play, one high school principal has been appointed who wrote no report at all, and another who handed in a very perfunctory report.

Just at present it looks as if the members of the Board of Education were wishing to take a hand in the naming of candidates for vacancies, although that is plainly the function of the Board of Superintendents. Last spring the Board of Superintendents nominated a principal for the Morris High School, but the Board of Education has repeatedly failed to confirm the nomination, and rumor has it that a member of the Board from the Bronx maintains, that, as Morris High School is in The Bronx, he ought to have the naming of the principal. To the victor belong the spoils. So the horrid spoils system, which has been banished from almost every other department of American life, is still flourishing in the schools, where, of all places, it ought never to exist.

Meantime, the rank and file of the teachers, seeing that promotion to the higher places in the system is not surely the result of merit, are discouraged and are leaving the system in droves and would leave even faster if they had not given hostages to fortune by years of contribution to the pension system.

All this could be changed if only the school principalships and the district superintendencies were placed under the civil service. Let a man feel that he could take his stand among his fellows on his record, which should include his teaching and supervising ability, his disciplinary power, his scholastic attainments in degrees won, and in books and articles published, his leadership as shown in his work in professional associations and committees; let him feel that even the places at the top were open to him, that he did not need pull but proficiency, and I make no doubt that a great change would take place in the spirit of our teaching force.

This is written, not in a vindictive, but in a constructive and reformatory spirit by a man who realizes that in this letter he is cutting off any

remote chance he may ever have had of promotion, in the hope that this serious blot upon the school system may be removed.

EDWIN FAIRLEY.

High School, Jamaica, N. Y., October 11.

High School Principalships

To the Editor of *The Evening Post*:

SIR: Among the responses which have come to me from my letter on "The Teachers' Lot," recently printed in *The Evening Post*, the only one I care to notice is that in regard to the action of a member of the Board of Education in holding up the nomination by the Board of Superintendents of a principal for the Morris High School.

One of my correspondents assures me that the member of the Board of Education is convinced that he can find a better man for the place than the one picked out by the superintendents. But what does the State Education law say? It says distinctly that nominations for the principalships of high schools shall be made by the Board of Superintendents. The Board of Education has no function in the premises, except to confirm or to reject the nomination of the superintendents. The Board of Education is then entirely within its rights when it rejects a nomination which comes before it. But it is entirely outside its rights when it attempts to dictate a nomination.

Whether such an attempt to dictate to the Board of Superintendents has been made, I have no means of knowing. The report, however, is very common that such an attempt is being made and the rumor goes on to mention the name of the man who is to be put into Morris High School. I hope that the report is not true, for I think that all right-minded men will agree that it is very important to keep the power of nomination where it belongs, in the Board of Superintendents.

No one has attempted to answer my main point, that nominations for high school principalships and district superintendencies should be made from an eligible list, made up of persons who have proved their worth especially by their record and by their positive contributions to education as also by their ability to pass equitable tests set by the Board of Examiners, who, so far as I have been able to observe, are fair-minded, honorable gentlemen, whom I would trust in any situation.

EDWIN FAIRLEY.

High School, Jamaica, N. Y., October 28.

What They Say

A Letter to the President of the American Federation of Teachers

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA, COLLEGE OF EDUCATION
Minneapolis, October 11, 1918

Mr Charles B Stillman,
1620 Lake Avenue,
Wilmette, Ill.

Dear Sir:

The last number of *THE AMERICAN TEACHER*, which I have taken since it began, is interesting as evidence of the progress of The American Federation of Teachers. It is needless to say that I am heartily in sympathy with this organization.

A committee of the N E A is carrying on an active canvass for members for that organization. An appeal is being made to all teachers to join as a patriotic duty. This is all right as far as it goes. The committee is made up of men and women in whom for the most part we have confidence, and certainly there should be more effective organization, but I believe it would be exceedingly unfortunate if teachers do not seize this opportunity for a thoro re-organization of the N E A. If teachers merely contribute their dues and do not seek a more democratic organization, some good will likely result as long as the committee in charge is as trustworthy as the one now appointed. But there should be a real federation of teachers before vast funds are contributed. This federation should have features akin to those of the American Federation of Labor. Of course I know you are in favor of such a move, but my point is that, while we should not antagonize the present movement for increasing membership in the N E A, we should agitate for a more democratic form of organization before we all join it. The two ideas should go together. I have been an active member of the N E A for more than thirty years and shall continue my membership no matter what happens, but I confess I would have more enthusiasm for an increase in membership if a change such as I have suggested is made.

I have read over the article of your organization which deals with membership. I see no provision for college teachers. Why should there not be such provision? It would certainly be unfortunate to exclude college teachers from a general federation of teachers. I think that college teachers are not less in need of enlightenment which such membership would bring than are grade teachers. In our colleges of education, and in the departments of educa-

tion in other colleges, an increasing number of students are having their minds trained for service. The same thing is true of normal schools, whose teachers are also excluded, at least they are not included specifically. What would result if our teacher-training institutions are conducted by those who are indifferent or hostile to a federation thru ignorance or prejudice? Probably the average instructor in colleges other than education would be the hardest proposition from the point of view of this reform. But even he is not hopeless. Events are compelling him to take notice of the need for democratizing educational administration. The war is stirring him to consider things other than tradition. One, a gentleman of culture, said to me the other day that he had learned more the past year than in any other year since he left college many years ago. His field is somewhat recondite and I am sure he had in mind something vastly different from the ancient lore in which he delves. Why not take in all college instructors who care to join?

Yours truly,

ALBERT W RANKIN,

Professor of Education.

An Open Letter to a Labor Leader

My dear Mr Bagley:

I hope you don't think too harshly of us, the teachers. True, we have not yet learned the lesson that labor learned many, many years ago, the lesson that unless we stand shoulder to shoulder in one solid rank, we are but the play thing of any political party or any petty autocrat that happens to strut the stage. Not only have we failed to stand together, but too often have we shown ourselves ready to desert in their darkest hour those few among our numbers who had the courage of their manhood and womanhood, who spoke out for them that are supine, and who were listed for the guillotine because of their courage. There are many other charges which you and your fellow-leaders of labor might bring against us, to which we should have to plead guilty.

First, we teachers are snobs. We have been lulled into the belief that our knowledge of book lore, often an antiquated and functionless book lore, has put us into some sphere of existence other than that inhabited by the common manual worker. We teach a lip-democracy when we tell our pupil that all labor is dignified provided it is socially productive. But we don't mean what we say.

We give ourselves the lie when we refuse to clasp hands with labor, when we refuse to join with the parents of the very children to whom we preach this lip democracy.

Then, too, we teachers are afraid. You may find it difficult to believe that we who preach moral courage to our children lack that moral courage which is necessary if we are to organize effectively. You would be astonished to hear teachers say, "I'll wait until the Union is strong before I join it." Yet we teachers say it again and again. You who have been at this game for years and have met with more courageous response, will find it hard to believe that we teachers are willing to let a small group face the danger and pay the price if need be. Yes, we are ready to join them only when their success is assured. We know that this very aloofness of ours is what handicaps the brave few, but we don't want to risk too much.

And, finally, I am ashamed to confess it, we teachers are ignorant. We do not understand the forces that are moulding the destinies of peoples to-day. We know too little of what English labor and French labor have achieved. We are not even aware of the fact that in our own country labor is coming into its own, that not only cooperative shop-government, but that self-determination in industries is becoming the government policy.

But you must not be indignant because we are snobs, you must not desert us tho we are timorous, you must not despair of us because we are ignorant. There are many forces at work which will help us overcome these serious handicaps and we shall yet be worthy of your regard and your friendship. When the Mayor of New York told us "to cut out the nonsense about salaries" and "to get out and look for other jobs if you don't like it" some of us, at any rate, realized that our position is a job, and that we are workmen and workwomen who are being spoken to in the manner which employers have used toward *unorganized* workmen and workwomen. When Associate Superintendent Tildsley admitted to one of the teachers whom he "interviewed" at the DeWitt Clinton High School in the famous "inquisition" that he would not have imposed the longer school day upon us if all the teachers had one strong Union, he taught some of us the strength that comes from courage of conviction. And when you and your co-leaders of labor told us at a recent meeting of the Teachers Union about the work of the War Labor Board and of the right which labor now has to speak its mind and of the representation which labor now has in this national body, some of us began to realize what is meant by the dignity of labor.

Yes, Mr Bagley, I venture the prediction that in the very near future we teachers shall have outgrown our snobbishness, we shall not be afraid, and we shall be more familiar with the place of labor

in the new democracy. The Teachers Union is growing surely, and also quickly. We teachers will be found worthy of a place in the ranks of labor, where we, too, may march erect, because we shall have acquired self-respect.

May I sign myself,

Your comrade,

JOSEPH JABLONOWER.

Mr James J Bagley,

President, The Pressmen's Union.

From a Humorous Pessimist

To the Editor, THE AMERICAN TEACHER:

I beg leave to offer the following list of definitions of school terms:

SCHOOL. A square prism with apertures called windows, convenient inlets for occasional sunbeams. The largest aperture called a door is a most welcome means of exit.

PRINCIPAL. A dynamo that forces "pep" and vim into petrified fossils called teachers.

TEACHER. An ossified human being who mechanically fills a funnel with a vitiated liquid called knowledge.

KNOWLEDGE. A well fermented, unadulterated liquid, with occasional sediment, that assimilates very readily with gray matter.

PUPIL. Best explained by comparison. Pupils are to teachers what cooties are to soldiers—something very annoying they are anxious to get rid of.

HEADS OF DEPARTMENT. A clan called the "Rubber Heeled Aristocracy," who are ever ready to pounce upon their easy prey.

TEACHERS' SALARIES. A miniature sample of UNITED STATES currency.

REFUNDS. A camouflaged finding like getting your penny out of the slot when it is out of gum.

CLERK. A permanent pest who tolls the curfews that drive the willing slaves to their dens called classrooms.

JANITOR. Something needed, never found. Occasionally adds fuel to the flame of discontent.

SUPERINTENDENT. A periodic epidemic that sweeps most violently thruout the realm, leaving susceptible bodies maimed for life.

SALARY INCREASE. An empty dream.

TERM. A sentence of six months as punishment for aspiring to the noble calling of cultivating the Lilliputian citizenship.

LUNCH ROOM. A place where teachers may imbibe victuals freely, and talk just as freely, about superior pests and pestilences. The only place in the school where free speech is attempted.

SUMMER VACATION. An extended furlough.
TEACHERS' MEETINGS. A regular social gathering—no refreshments served. The freshest serve the meek.
BELLS. Mysterious diabolical sounds that make things stir.
CORRIDORS. Darkened labyrinths that lead from one dungeon to another.
BASEMENT. A subterranean excavation to which the conscientiously wicked are banished.
BASEMENT DUTY. A chronic inevitable curse. Best avoided by convenient absence.

IRENE R SINELNIK,
 P S 165, Brooklyn, N Y.

Home Service for Teachers

THE RED CROSS CHRISTMAS ROLL CALL

SINCE the war began and up to the end of 1918, the American Red Cross will have expended over \$70,000,000 in relief work in France, \$20,000,000 in Italy, nearly \$2,000,000 in Switzerland, and \$6,000,000 in its Home Service Branch. All of which means, that thousands of sufferers have been healed and housed and fed, that thousands upon thousands of soldiers have been given comfort and cheer, that thousands of American prisoners have been furnished with supplies, and that thousands of soldiers' and sailors' families, thru the Home Service Branch of the American Red Cross, have been aided and befriended.

That the American Red Cross has been able to serve thus widely and efficiently is due of course to the cooperation and service of the American people who have given themselves and their money gladly and untiringly to this cause of Mercy and Relief.

Not least among these to give of themselves, their time, their energy, and their powerful and far-reaching influence, are the teachers of the United States. Their service cannot be undervalued. So many are the doors to which they have access in presenting the American Red Cross message and opportunity. So many are the ways in which they may reach the hearts of the people.

The American Red Cross feels that in them it has indeed a mighty band of workers stretched over the land. And the American Red Cross extends its appreciation to them for service they have already so effectively rendered and appeals to them to know no limit in service.

The Home Service Branch of the American Red Cross is one of its most important activities and one which particularly needs the cooperation and support of the teachers of the country. Its purpose is to care for the families of our men in the service, relieving them of money troubles, worries and loneliness, to keep the soldier still in Europe in touch with the folks at home, and to aid the disabled soldier. This it accomplishes thru its 10,000 Home Service committees which reach all over the country, into isolated communities and thru cities, spreading the doctrine of neighborliness and help.

The service of teachers in this branch of American Red Cross work is invaluable. By sitting on local committees, by joining Home Service workers in the nation-wide campaign to encourage frequent and cheerful letter writing to the soldiers and most important, by keeping in sympathetic touch with all the families of their schools thru the children, learning their needs and worries and reporting them to Home Service committees for relief and readjustment, they will be doing much toward keeping American homes strong and brave and happy, and much toward maintaining the morale of our army and navy. For unworried soldiers are always the best soldiers, and unworried homes among soldiers' best assets.

Therefore, the American Red Cross urges the teachers of the United States to do their utmost in aiding its Home Service neighborliness and help in American homes.

Compulsory Military Service

The conspiracy to clamp the muffler of universal military service on the aspirations of the American people will, if we are not mistaken, encounter another serious obstacle if President Wilson and Sec-

retary Baker can thwart the scheme long enough to give the returning and released soldiers an opportunity to express their views. So long as Kaiserism remained to be defeated, the young men of America's great armies went grimly and even cheerfully about their task of learning to be soldiers. There was hardly a whisper of complaint. They were for doing the job, and doing it thoroly. Today, with peace assured, we are beginning to get from them their true feeling about the life of a soldier. They don't like it. Their one desire is to get home and get out of a uniform. "Leave it to the M. P.'s," chorused a group of soldiers in the front line above Verdun when the *New York Times* correspondent asked if they'd like to be in the army of occupation. "We want to get home." If soldiering were popular under any conditions, it would have been popular to boys with the prospect of a triumphal march through the beautiful country of Alsace-Lorraine and the Rhine. In the camps in this country it is the same. There is less danger of militarism becoming popular in this country than many of us feared. Ask the boys who have been thru it. Their experience will place them as firmly in opposition to Dr. Nicholas Murray Butler and his kind as those of us who arrived at it on more theoretical grounds. The campaign for universal service is a dishonest conspiracy fostered by men who are desperately trying to keep back the rising tide of democracy, and to save their privileges. They believe that military discipline for every boy of every generation will breed a more uncritical and unthinking reverence for established institutions, a habit of unquestioning obedience, a conformity that is scornful of heresies and untried things. In England this issue is understood by every liberal. The Bishop of Oxford, who returned last week after a long visit in this country, must have been appalled by the callow acceptance among large circles here of an institution that, as he told them, would be fatal to the progress of human freedom.—*The Public*, of November 23, 1918.

Organization for Protection

The decision of the Education Department of the State of New York in the case of the three teachers who were dismissed last spring from the DeWitt Clinton High School in this city has been rendered by Thomas E. Finegan, acting Commissioner of Education; the Commissioner, Dr. John H. Finley, having escaped the necessity of passing upon the matter by virtue of his timely absence in Palestine and elsewhere. The decision, as was expected, affirms the decision of the Board of Education, and the separation of the teachers from the schools of New York City is, apparently, made permanent. A careful reading of Mr. Finegan's decision leads one to wonder on what principles of equity, not to

speak of justice, the rights of public school teachers in New York against whom official charges may happen to be directed are dealt with by the highest educational authority in the State. The three teachers in question were suspended from their positions in November, 1917, on charges of "conduct unbecoming a teacher." The president of the Board of Education, William G. Willcox, in a speech before the Board on December 19, specifically stated that "the three teachers are not charged with disloyalty"; and the charges themselves, stripped of non-essential incidents and differences, amounted to nothing more specific (save, in the case of one defendant, a debatable question of moral taste) than the allegation that they had been neutral regarding the war and had failed to show a sufficiently enthusiastic patriotism. Mr. Finegan, however, in his decision, rides rough-shod over the defendants, and declares that "a person who does not, without reservation, utilize all his intellectual powers and exert all his influence as a teacher" to make the schools a place where "the fundamental principles of America's philosophy of life and government" are efficiently taught, "fails properly to support the Government in this war." The parts of Mr. Finegan's decision in which he deals with the substantive elements in the case read more like a stump speech than like the reasoned words of the acting head of a great educational system. If this is the way New York is to foster patriotism in its schools, the sooner all the teachers organize to protect themselves and rid the schools of politics, the better.—*The Nation*, of November 23, 1918.

A Small Chance for Merit

Lack of agreement between successive boards of education and boards of superintendents as to the best qualified persons for positions of high school principals and district superintendents emphasizes the fact that as yet a plan has not been devised whereby the merit of the various persons considered is definitely established. There isn't any eligible list for such positions and proposals made to prescribe that lists be made up have again and again been voted down. Lacking such a list, the Board of Education hasn't even an official record that will reveal after a little study just who is best fitted for a particular vacancy. Positions often are filled by favor or by chance. One time it is the incident of a superintendent switching his vote that results after a long drawn out balloting in a majority vote for a candidate who has done nothing—especially, nothing that would antagonize any of the superintendents. Again the chance of acquaintance or friendship with a member of a board of education secures a nomination that otherwise would not have been voted. *School Page of the New York Globe*, for November 25, 1918.



I Am Thy Deliverer

I am the Bitter Enemy of Injustice, Tyranny and Autocracy.

The Sycophant scoffs at me, the Political Appointee sneers at me,
the Incompetent and the Self-seeker misrepresent me, and

The Dishonest and the Cowardly fear me.

I am the Saviour of thy Self-respect, the Promoter of thy Initiative,
the Sustainer of thy Courage and Ideals.

I am the Bane of the Real Estate Dealers Association, and of the
War Profiteers and their Educational Tools.

I fight for Right as against Might, for Democracy as against Autoc-
racy, for Merit as against Pull, for Loyalty to Ideals as against

Loyalty to Persons, Parties, or Shibboleths.

I am the Protector of thy Economic and Physical Well-Being,

I am the Exponent of a new era, the Era of Cooperation.

I am thy Salvation; for I am the Child of Labor.

I am the Teachers'
UNION

Washington D.C.

*The U.S. Government
Library
Washington D.C.*

